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THE CREATION STORY IN OVID *MET.* i

BY FRANK EGLESTON ROBBINS

The account of the origin of the universe offered by Ovid in *Met.* i. 5–88 bears so many resemblances, in one passage or another, to various ancient cosmic theories that commentators have failed to agree in determining the authority on whom Ovid depended. Among those that have been put forward are the Egyptians,¹ Empedocles,² Anaxagoras,³ and Varro.⁴ None of the advocates of these suggestions have found it possible to show that Ovid adhered consistently in every detail to the systems which they select as his models; nor do I, in making a further attempt at the solution of the problem, expect to display the poet as a strict sectarian in his cosmogony. The fact must be recognized at the beginning that a thorough and consistent adherence to one theory is not to be found in the Ovidian account of the universe, and, furthermore, is not to be expected. Ovid did not possess the philosophic temperament of Vergil, and in the *Metamorphoses* he is not so much concerned with setting forth true explanations as with telling stories in an interesting and graceful way. No one, in other words, would regard the *Metamorphoses* as a didactic and not a narrative poem.

On the other hand, it is equally certain that Ovid employed material which he drew from previous writers, and scholars have made exhaustive studies of his borrowings.⁵ In the present discussion, however, the question will be rather that of the sources of his views of the world than of his adoption of the phraseology of other writers.

Before entering upon a more minute discussion of these ideas, another a priori assumption should be noted, namely, that in all

¹ Gierig's edition, revised by Lemaire, Paris, 1821.

² Carlo Pascal, *L'imitazione di Empedocle nelle Metamorfosi di Ovidio* reprinted in *Graccia Capta*, Firenze, 1905.

³ Most recently by F. Polle, "Ovidius und Anaxagoras," *N. J. f. Ph. u. Paed.* 145, 53 ff.; previously by Koeppen and Lenz (cf. Gierig-Lemaire on i. 5 and 21); cf. also Siebelis-Polle ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1880), on *Met.* i. 21.

⁴ Lafaye, *Les Metamorphoses d'Ovide*, especially pp. 220–21.

⁵ E.g., A. Zingerle, *Ovidius und sein Verhältnis zu den Vorgängern und gleichzeitigen röm. Dichtern*, Innsbruck, 1869 and 1870.

probability Ovid, in view of his generally non-philosophical character, would not be so likely to delve into the half-forgotten theories of the pre-Socratics and present anew a consistent account based on one of them as to set forth opinions that were commonly held in his own time and were familiar to his readers. This introduces another difficulty, which is really the fundamental one of the whole problem. In Ovid's time the popular philosophic-scientific theories were the product of eclecticism, containing elements which were ultimately derived from many sources, a situation which is certain to cause confusion and inconsistency in the non-technical poets of Ovid's type, and which is likely to lead astray commentators who seek to locate the sources of their ideas. Certain fundamental notions came at this time to be used in common, and it is therefore useless to declare that a writer follows any individual philosophical school because he uses one of these commonplaces, unless it is also possible to point out in his work ideas characteristic of the sect with which it is sought to identify him.

Turning now to the discussion of Ovid's creation narrative and taking up in order the various theories that have been proposed with regard to its source, we may first dismiss as improbable that which makes the poet derive his lore from the Egyptians. It has never been seriously considered and is supported only by one citation of the prooemium of Diogenes Laertius. A second theory, which asserts that Ovid drew upon Anaxagoras, has quite recently been advocated by F. Polle (*supra*, p. 401, n. 3). It is readily seen, as Polle admits, that there are such fundamental differences between Ovid's ideas and the doctrines of Anaxagoras that it cannot be claimed that Ovid followed Anaxagoras at all consistently. The elements of the universe in Ovid are the common four, but according to Anaxagoras they were the corpuscles of all sorts of denounce substances, just the opposite of the Empedoclean elements, as Aristotle declared (*De gen. et corr.* i. 1. 314a 24). Furthermore, Socrates, whose disappointment with the way in which Anaxagoras employed the *Nous* in his cosmogony is related in *Phaedo* 97B ff., could hardly have made the same objections to the *deus* of the Ovidian passage, whose activity in the ordering of the cosmos is emphasized throughout. If Anaxagoras made mere mechanical processes too prominent, just

the opposite is true of Ovid. In view of these fundamental discrepancies and of the fact that it is impossible to show that Ovid set forth any of the distinctive doctrines of Anaxagoras, this proposal also may be rejected.

A third suggestion is Empedocles, whom Carlo Pascal has recently put forth as a Greek source for Ovid (*supra*, p. 401, n. 2). It must be granted that in some respects Ovid's account resembles that of Empedocles—in the introduction of four elements, and the chaos. But the *deus* of Ovid fails to correspond with Φιλότης in Empedocles, and there is no mention of a power opposite to Φιλότης, one of the essentials of the Empedoclean system.¹ And if we compare the words of the two poets in the passages cited by Pascal, we shall find in the cases where there are real parallels what he should have himself observed, that Ovid is affected by Empedocles only through the medium of Lucretius. For example, Pascal compares the following:

Met. i. 10 ff.:

nullus adhuc mundo praebebat lumina Titan,
nec noua crescendo reparabat cornua Phoebe,
nec circumfuso pendebat in aëre tellus
ponderibus librata suis, nec bracchia longo
margine terrarum porrexerat Amphitrite.

Emped. v. 172 ff., Mullach:

ἐνθ' οὐτ' ἡελίοιο δειδίσκεται ἀγλαὸν εἶδος
οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδ' αἴης λάσιον δέμας οὐδὲ θάλασσα.

But cf. *Lucr.* v. 432–34:

hic neque tum solis rota cerni lumine largo
altiuolans poterat nec magni sidera mundi
nec mare nec caelum nec denique terra neque aër.

Of the two possible sources the probabilities surely favor Lucretius. Pascal states that the use of *Titan* (= *sol*) is derived from Empedocles (v. 236 M., fr. 8 Diels); but reference to the text shows that it is a common Ovidian usage and occurs also in contemporary poetry.² With lines 24–25 Pascal compares Emped. v. 163 ff. M., where it is said that after Νεύκος came to the bottom of the vortex and Φιλότης

¹ Cf. the review in *W. kl. Ph.*, 1903, p. 769.

² Ovid *Met.* ii. 118; vi. 438; *Fasti* i. 617; ii. 73; iv. 180, 919; *Paneg. Mess.* 157; Verg. *Aen.* iv. 119.

to the center, things came together to be one. The likeness, verbally considered, is not convincing, and as before it may be objected that Ovid does not mention *Nēikos* at all, while his *deus* is not very like Φιλότης. Instead of comparing Ovid i. 26–27:

ignea conuexi uis et sine pondere caeli
emicuit summaque locum sibi fecit in arce,

with Emped. v. 261 M.:

[έκθορε μὲν πρῶτον πῦρ] καρπαλίμως ἀνόπαιον

it is much better to cite Lucr. v. 459 f.:

. . . erumpens primus se sustulit aether
ignifer et multos secum leuis abstulit ignis.

The few other parallels which Pascal suggests have even less to recommend them. If we are to admit that there was any Empedoclean influence on Ovid, it is far safer to suppose that it came through Lucretius.

This leads naturally to the consideration of the relation between the Lucretian and the Ovidian accounts. Now, however true it be that Ovid shows traces of Lucretian influence, certain important differences prove that he was setting forth no Epicurean or Lucretian theory of creation. The greatest point of divergence is that Ovid ascribes creation to some god, "deus et melior . . . natura," 21; "quisquis fuit ille deorum," 32; "mundi fabricator," 57; "opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo," 79; but Lucretius bluntly says (v. 419–20):

nam certe neque consilio primordia rerum
ordine se suo quaeque sagaci mente locarunt.

Secondly, the *semina* in the two accounts¹ (for both use the term) differ. Ovid's *semina* are the four elements² endowed with qualities—cold, hot, dry, wet—that to Lucretius are secondary.³ They are not at all the Epicurean atoms. Thirdly, Ovid says the earth is a globe (33–34). Lucretius does not make any direct statement, but he

¹ Ovid i. 9; Lucr. v. 456.

² It is evident that "caelo terras undas aëre," 22–23, refer to the four elements, and line 9 would without doubt refer to the mixture of these elements. There are also rougher tripartite divisions: "mare terras caelum," 5, and "tellus pontus aér," 15; cf. for the former Lucr. v. 92, 594.

³ Lucr. ii. 730 ff.

probably thought it flat,¹ and in any case his theory of its support by another body beneath it is unknown to Ovid.² Fourthly, the stars according to Ovid are placed in the ether (69–71) but according to Lucretius in the air below the ether (v. 472). Fifthly, there is no suggestion of a divine origin for man in Lucretius as in Ovid. Besides these there are minor differences in the order in which the events of the evolutionary process are related.

Notwithstanding these important differences, certain phrases of *Met.* i are so like expressions found in *De nat. rer.* v that Ovid's use of Lucretian material is a natural assumption.³ But this need not be more than verbal reminiscence, for, as was pointed out above, a community of commonplace ideas between two poets of this period of eclecticism argues no necessary dependence of one upon the other.

Both Lucretius and Ovid begin by describing a chaotic state of matter. In Lucretius it is the fact that there is no *consilium* to guide them which bring the atoms into this chaos (v. 416–31, especially 429–31). Now, though the conception of a chaotic state is similar in the two, it has already been seen that the component parts, the *semina*, are very unlike, and furthermore the notion of a chaos is so common a thing in ancient writers that Ovid might have taken it from almost any source besides Lucretius, or simply have versified one of the ideas that was in the air in his time.⁴ The passages (Ovid 10–14; Lucr. 432–34) in which the poets describe the chaotic state

¹ Cf. Munro on *Lucr.* v. 534 and 764.

² *Lucr.* v. 534 ff.

³ Zingerle's work (cited above) conclusively shows that Ovid knew and used Lucretius.

⁴ The term "chaos," used by Ovid, is not found in Lucretius; it is not, in fact, a part of the strictly philosophical vocabulary. It occurs in Hesiod *Theog.* 46 and thereafter frequently in Greek poetry. The notion of a chaotic condition at first is extremely common; Euripides (*Melanippe*) fr. 488; Aristoph. *Aves* 693; Apoll. Rhod. i. 496 ff.: ηειδεν δ' ὡς γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἥδε θάλασσα | τὸ πρὸν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοις μῆτ συναρηρότα μορφῇ, | νελκεος δ' ἐξ ὀλοοῦ διέκριθεν ἀμφὶς ἔκαστα. . . . It was certainly a part of the Epicurean system, as Lucretius shows. Verg. *Ecl.* vi. 31 describes a sort of Epicurean chaos. In the Orphic writers, also, descriptions of a chaos something like Ovid's occur; e.g., (Clem. Rom.) *Recog.* x. 30, Abel, p. 162; and Apoll. Rhod. as cited. Diod. Sic. i. 7 has a description of a chaos. In poetry, cf. (Tib.) iv. 1. 18, where a chaos would naturally precede the ordering process described, though the poet does not expressly say so; also Ovid *Ars am.* ii. 467 ff.; *Fasti* i. 105 ff., which are quite similar to *Met.* i.

are very similar and may be real parallels (*supra*, p. 403), though they need be considered no more than verbal ones. But when in vs. 15–20 Ovid explains that this condition was due to the conflict of the elements, and Lucretius (435–42) that it was due to atomic motions, they are far from agreement; and the same is true when Ovid ends this conflict by the intervention of the *deus*, Lucretius by the attraction of likes. There are a few other passages the wording of which is similar,¹ but this need be no more than the casual likeness that is to be looked for in poets treating similar subjects with a similar background of well-known ideas—it being admitted of course that Ovid knew the *De natura rerum* and might have adapted some of its phrases to his own use. No more is to be inferred from the passages describing how the parts of the universe came to occupy their present positions.² These are commonplaces. In view of the fact that Ovid and Lucretius are, as has been shown, absolutely opposed to one another in their general conception of the world, its evolution, and God, and in the lack of clearer evidence of conscious imitation (only one parallel cited is really of more than secondary importance—Ovid i. 10–14; Lucr. v. 432–34), it must be concluded that the resemblances between them are either merely adventitious or purely literary.

None of the suggestions thus far considered has proved fruitful, yet it is quite certain from their character that Ovid's ideas were derived perhaps from one, perhaps from more than one, philosophic source. In order to throw light upon these sources we may profitably examine certain passages of Cicero which represent views of the uni-

¹ Ovid 22–23: nam caelo terras et terris abscidit undas
et liquidum spisso secreuit ab aere caelum.

Lucr. 446–48: hoc est, a terris altum secernere caelum,
et sorsum mare uti secreto umore pateret,
seorsus item puri secretique aetheris ignes.

Other speciously similar passages: concerning the sea and winds, Ov. 36–37; Lucr. 503–4; the making of hills and plains, Ov. 43–44; Lucr. 492–93; cf. also Ovid 68 (of the ether): "nec quicquam terrenae *faecis* habentem," with Lucr. 497 (of the earth): "subsedit funditus ut *faex*." Editors of Ovid here compare Homer P 425: *ἀρπύετον αἰθέρα*.

² Fire rose (Ov. 26–27; Lucr. 458–59) and took the highest place (Ov. 27; Lucr. 470, 500–501); air is next lower (Ov. 28; Lucr. 501; cf. 472, 490); earth is heavy (Ov. 29–30; Lucr. 429) and in the middle (Ov. 31; Lucr. 451); water surrounds the earth (Ov. 31; Lucr. 498).

verse commonly held in Ovid's own time. They are not so much concerned with the world's origin as with the arrangement of its parts, but still they will be of service. One of these is *Tusc. disp.* i. 17. 40: "persuadent enim mathematici terram in medio mundo sitam ad uniuersi caeli complexum quasi puncti instar obtinere, quod κέντρον illi uocant; eam porro naturam esse quattuor omnia gignentium corporum, ut, quasi partita habeant inter se ac diuisa momenta, terrena et humida suopte nutu et suo pondere ad paris angulos in terram et in mare ferantur, reliquae duae partes, una ignea, altera animalis, ut illae superiores in medium locum mundi grauitate ferantur et pondere, sic hae rursum rectis lineis in caelestem locum subuolent, siue ipsa natura superiora adipetente, siue quod a grauioribus leuiora natura repellantur." The second is very similar, *De nat. deor.* ii. 91: "principio enim terra sita in media parte mundi circumfusa undique est hac animali spirabilique natura cui nomen est aér hunc rursus amplectitur immensus aether, qui constat ex altissimis ignibus," etc.

The similarity of these passages to Ovid's description of the arrangement of the world is obvious (cf. especially vs. 26–31).

Now it is very probable that both these passages were borrowed by Cicero from Stoic sources. In the second case this is sure;¹ the second book of the *De natura deorum* is a Stoic exposition throughout; and the first is quite certainly Stoic as well,² both from the fact that it is in juxtaposition with other Stoic passages and from its likeness to the *De nat. deor.* ii. 91. In addition we may note that it is known from other sources that the Stoics made such statements about the universe.³

Besides these general agreements, there are several other Ciceronian passages which, each introduced in a Stoic context, parallel the most famous lines of *Met.* i, namely, 84–86:

pronaque cum spectent animalia cetera terram
os homini sublime dedit! caelumque uidere
iussit et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.

¹ See Mayor on the sources of *De nat. deor.* ii in his edition, II, xvi ff.

² See Dougan, *Tusc. disp.*, Introd. xxi, for a summary of the views of scholars, and p. xxiii for *Tusc. disp.* i. 17. 40.

³ E.g., Diog. Laer. vii. 137, 155.

In the same Stoic book of the *De natura deorum* Cicero writes (56. 140): "qui [i.e. di] primum eos [i.e. homines] excitatos celsos et erectos constituerunt, ut deorum cognitionem caelum intuentes capere possent." This evidently was adduced as a proof of design in the world in the Stoic teleological argument which he copies. Again we find the same thought in *De legg.* i. 9. 26–27: "nam cum ceteros animantis abieciisset ad pastum, solum hominem erexit et ad caeli quasi cognationis domiciliique pristini conspectum excitauit, tum speciem ita formauit oris ut in ea penitus reconditos mores effingeret."¹ The topic of man's erect stature was a common one among ancient writers² and upon this alone one could not base an argument concerning Ovid's sources. Yet, after Plato and Aristotle, it seems to have been fairly distinctive of the Stoic school, and I wish in short to argue that so many of Ovid's utterances are paralleled by the common topics of the Stoic writers, without any serious discrepancies which do not find a natural explanation, that, in view of the ease with which it could have come about, it is probable that the reading of Stoic treatises or of books influenced by Stoicism was the strongest influence exerted upon the poet in *Met.* i. 5–88.

In the first place, to examine the agreements between Ovid and the Stoics, we have the matter of the elements. In i. 19 ("frigida pugnabant calidis, humentia siccis") there is evidently a reference to the Stoic classification of the air as cold, fire hot, water wet, and earth dry,³ the assignment of one quality only to each being a distinctively Stoic feature, for Aristotle had asserted that each element has two distinguishing qualities. Again in the next line, "mollia cum duris, sine pondere, habentia pondus," there may be a glance at the Stoic distinction between air and fire as light and earth and water as heavy.⁴

In the second place, there is much that can be urged to show that the Ovidian *deus* is modeled after the Stoic theology. In view of the

¹ Also *Tusc. disp.* i. 69: "hominemque ipsum quasi contemplatorem caeli ac deorum cultorem"; cf. *Met.* i. 85–86.

² See Mayor's note upon *De nat. deor.* ii. 56. 140 and S. O. Dickerman, *De argumentis quibusdam e structura hominis et animalium petitis*, Halle, 1909, 12 and 92, for examples.

³ Cf. Diog. Laer. vii. 137.

⁴ (*Plut.*) *Epit. plac.* i. 12 (*Dox.* 311 a 1); Cic. *Tusc. disp.* i. 17. 40 *supra*; cf. Ovid i. 67, "grauitate carentem aethera."

plainly philosophical character of the whole passage, popular though it be in treatment, it may be safely assumed that the *deus* mentioned was not taken directly from mythology and the creation treated simply as another metamorphosis;¹ in that case the influence of the theogonies ought to be plainly discernible. The *deus* is certainly derived rather from philosophical sources. It has been shown above that the Ovidian *deus* is neither of the Epicurean, Empedoclean, nor Anaxagorean types. By this method of elimination the possibilities are reduced practically to two out of all ancient philosophy, Plato and the Stoics. Now the cosmogony of Ovid differs too much from that of the *Timaeus* to allow us to believe that the latter was its direct source; on the other hand, seeming Platonic reminiscences in Ovid may easily be regarded as coming at second hand to him, in view of the adoption of so many of the topics of the *Timaeus* by subsequent schools, including the Stoics.

The Stoics believed in a supreme deity, who established this world in wisdom and providence.² These attributes well suit the *deus* of Ovid, who puts a stop to the warring of the elements: "hanc deus et melior litem natura diremit" (21). In other passages the god is represented as acting for the good of the world, in a providential manner: cf. 32 ff., 47 f., "sic onus inclusum numero distinxit eodem cura dei": 79, "mundi melioris origo." It has already been pointed out³ that the epithet *melior natura* (21) may be a reference to the Stoic identification of God and Nature, or Nature permeated by God. It might further be claimed that Ovid's hesitation to name the god concerned in the creation ("quisquis fuit ille deorum," 32) may be due to a certain uncleanness on the part of the Stoics who were his sources, who, as the interlocutor in Cicero remarks, identify God now with the world, now with the world-soul, and again with natural law or the ether,⁴ and as Diogenes Laertius⁵ tells us named the

¹ In this connection note that lightning in this passage (56: "et cum fulminibus facientes frigora uentos") is regarded as a purely meteorological phenomenon rather than as Jove's weapon, as below in i. 197, 253, 259, etc.

² Diog. Laert. vii. 138: τὸν δὴ κέσμον οἰκεῖσθαι κατὰ νοῦν καὶ πρόνοιαν; cf. *ibid.* 147: θεὸν . . . προνοητικὸν κέσμον τε καὶ τῶν ἐν κέσμῳ . . . εἶναι δὲ τὸν μὲν δημιουργὸν τῷν δλῶν, καὶ ὥσπερ πατέρα πάντων . . .

³ Lafaye, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

⁴ *De nat. deor.* i. 36, 37; cf. Diog. Laer. vii. 148; *Plac.* i. 7. 33.

⁵ vii. 147.

supreme deity Zeus, Hera, Athena, Poseidon, Hephaestus, or Demeter according to the particular attribute emphasized. In strict logic, of course, the expression suggests one of a number of gods, rather than one god under various names; but a poet does not have to adhere to strict logic.

It has already been seen (*supra*, p. 407) that Ovid's description of the arrangement of the parts of the world is in accord with that of the Stoics. The passage concerning chaos (5-20) is not so easy to parallel, perhaps because the Stoic cosmogony is not fully known to us; but in one respect at least, the employment of elements and not atoms, the two are in full accord. It may be that Ovid introduced the chaos simply as the general belief of his day and as a common poetic motif,¹ and with this interwove the Stoic ideas of the elements and a Deity; it is possible on the other hand that his notion of a chaos could have been derived from his reading of the Stoics. One account of the Stoic cosmogony at least suggests a chaotic state; Diog. Laer. vii. 136: *κατ' ἀρχὰς μὲν οὖν καθ' αὐτὸν ὄντα [sc. Δία]* τρέπειν τὴν πᾶσαν οὐσίαν δι' ἀέρος εἰς ὕδωρ· καὶ ὥσπερ ἐν τῇ γονῇ τὸ σπέρμα περιέχεται, οὕτω καὶ τοῦτον σπερματικὸν λόγον ὄντα τοῦ κόσμου τοιόνδε ὑπολιπέσθαι ἐν τῷ ὑγρῷ, εὐεργόν αὐτῷ ποιοῦντα τὴν ὑλην πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἔξης γένεσιν· εἴτα ἀπογεννᾶν πρῶτον τὰ τέσσαρα στοιχεῖα, πῦρ, ὕδωρ, ἀέρα, γῆν. The making of the four elements is again described by Diogenes in vii. 142, and it is there stated that by *μίξις* plants and animals were made from them. It is natural to assume that in this process the four elements were thought of as existing together at first, not separated off from one another, just as in *Met.* i. 5-20. The Ciceronian passages quoted above also imply that this state of mixture formed part of the Stoic theory. Ovid, then, would simply omit, as poor poetic material and unsanctioned by poetic convention, the details regarding changes in matter previous to the production of the elements, and the doctrine of the *σπερματικὸς λόγος*, as we find them in Diogenes Laertius.²

It is to be noted further that in both the Ovidian and the Stoic

¹ See above, p. 405, n. 4. The notion of a conflict or battle between the elements (*Met.* i. 18 ff.) can hardly be paralleled from Stoic sources, but may well be explained, as a poetic, rather than philosophic, motif, sanctioned by such passages as Lucr. v. 439: "proelia miscens"; Apoll. Rhod. i. 498: *νείκεος δ' ἐξ δλοοῖο*, etc.

² But for the *σπερματικὸς λόγος* doctrine in Ovid see *infra*, p. 413.

accounts the development of the world from chaos is due to divine agency, therein differing radically from the pre-Socratic cosmogonies with their doctrine of a cosmic whorl, *δίνη*, which sorts things out and generates the universe. *Deus et melior natura*—God, not necessarily an anthropomorphic god, but perhaps rather divine power in nature working for a good end—is the agent of creation in Ovid, just as the Stoic Zeus, remaining in matter and sometimes identified with Nature, is the cause of cosmic evolution.

Lesser parallels with the Stoic writings in considerable number may be pointed out in the Ovidian creation narrative. With verse 45 begins a passage describing the zones of both the sky and the earth:

45: utque duae dextra caelum totidemque sinistra
 parte secant zonae, quinta est ardentior illis;
 sic onus inclusum numero distinxit eodem
 cura dei, totidemque plagae tellure premuntur.
 quarum quae media est, non est habitabilis aestu;
 50: nix tegit alta duas; totidem inter utramque locauit,
 temperiemque dedit mixta cum frigore flamma.

This topic is one which was treated both by poets and by scientific men. We are informed that Parmenides first defined the inhabited portions of the earth with reference to the zones of the tropics,¹ also that Pythagoras divided the earth into the five commonly named zones.² We are upon much firmer ground when we find it stated that the Stoics spoke of the five circles in the heavens and the five zones of the earth. The straightforward account of the Stoic teaching upon this point is very like the Ovidian passage cited: Diog. Laer. vii. 155: κύκλους δὲ εἶναι ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ πέντε 156 ζῶνται τε ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἰσι πέντε πρώτη βόρειος, καὶ ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀρκτικὸν κύκλον, ἀσίκητος διὰ ψύχος· δευτέρα, εὐκρατος· τρίτη ἀσίκητος ὑπὸ καυμάτων, ἡ διακεκαυμένη καλουμένη· τετάρτη ἡ ἀντεύκρατος· πέμπτη νότιος, ἀσίκητος διὰ ψύχος. There are two parallels to Ovid's lines in contemporary poetry—Vergil *Georg.* i. 233 ff. and *Paneg. Mess.* 152 ff.³

¹ *Plac.* iii. 11. 4.

² *Ibid.* iii. 14. 1.

³ The Vergilian passage in content is most similar to Ovid but could hardly have been Ovid's direct model; they appear rather to have the same source. Both the passages have more poetic embellishment than that in the *Metamorphoses*; cf. also Cic. *Tusc. disp.* i. 28. 68–69.

In two other respects Ovid agrees with the Stoics, and disagrees, it may be noted, with the Epicureans, in holding that the stars are in the *caelum*, that is, in the ether (70–71), and that the earth is spherical (34–35).¹

Finally we must consider the passage which narrates the creation of man, ending with the lines on his erect stature already discussed above:

72:	neu regio foret ulla suis animantibus orba, astræ tenent caeleste solum formaeque deorum,
	cesserunt nitidis habitandæ piscibus undæ,
73:	terra feras cepit, uolucres agitabilis aëris. sanctius his animal mentisque capacius altae deerat adhuc, et quod dominari in cetera posset.
	natus homo est: siue hunc diuino semine fecit ille opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo,
80:	siue recens tellus seductaque nuper ab alto aethere cognati retinebat semina caeli, quam satus Iapeto mixtam fluuialibus undis fixxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta deorum.

The first few lines, 72–75, present the notion, fairly common in antiquity, that each element has its own inhabitant. Plato seems first to have used the topic, but it is important to note that Cicero in the Stoic second book of the *De natura deorum* (42) mentions it as an opinion of Aristotle.² This, then, along with so many other ideas of Plato and Aristotle, was apparently appropriated by the Stoics, and Ovid might more probably have taken it at third hand from a Stoic source than directly from Plato or Aristotle.

More closely related to Stoicism is the use of *animantibus*, 72, which shows that the stars, mentioned in 73, are regarded by Ovid as animated—a good Stoic doctrine.³ In 73 the stars also are called *formæ deorum*, which accords with the Stoic belief that the stars are gods.⁴

¹ For Stoic views on the first point, see Cic. *De nat. deor.* ii. 42, 92, 117–18; for the second, *Plac.* iii. 10. 1; Diog. Laer. vii. 145.

² Plato *Tim.* 39E; on the use of this topic see Robbins, *The Hesiodic Literature*, Chicago, 1912, 9, n. 5. The reference to Aristotle is probably to the lost *De philosophia*; see Mayor on *De nat. deor.* ii. 42, who collects references.

³ Cic. *De nat. deor.* ii. 41–42.

⁴ Cic. *De nat. deor. loc. cit.*; Chrysippus *ap.* Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 38. 5; *Plac.* i. 7. 33. The Stoics, however (and apparently also Ovid), would not identify the stars and the highest god, whose seat is in the ether with the stars; Diog. Laer. vii. 138–39.

There are two suggestions as to the making of man, that he was made *diuino semine* by the mysterious creator, or that in the clay fashioned by Prometheus lingered some of the fire of heaven, *semina caeli*. The first seems to have been suggested by the very characteristic Stoic doctrine of the *σπερματικὸς λόγος*, generating principles contained in the *πῦρ τεχνικόν*, or highest god, "in accordance with which individual things come into existence by Destiny."¹ The second suggestion, though not so philosophic in character and apparently a concession to mythology, is not without its bearing on Stoicism. According to the Stoics the mind of man is of the same pure fire as the heavens, unlike the burning fire commonly seen.² The statement in 83, that man was made in the image of the gods, is hardly Stoic in origin,³ at least, we cannot parallel it from the Stoic sources in our present state of knowledge. But it occurs in a mythological context and really belongs with the stories of the same character later on in the book, where the gods do have human shapes.⁴

The present discussion has at least served to show that it is needless to search for Ovid's sources outside of the beliefs that were currently held in his day. Those who attempt to establish a connection between Ovid and any of the pre-Socratics are forced to rely upon the presence in both of perfectly commonplace ideas and sooner or later meet with grave unlikenesses. Lafaye's arguments in favor of Varro as a source are indefinite and unsupported by evidence. On the other hand, comparing Ovid and Stoic doctrine, we have been able

¹ *Plac.* i. 7. 33: *πῦρ τεχνικὸν ὁδῷ βαδίζον ἐπὶ γένεσιν κύσμου, ἐμπειρειληφός πάντας τοὺς σπερματικοὺς λόγους, καθ' οὓς ἔκαστα καθ' εἰμαρμένην γίνεται*; cf. also Ritter and Preller, *Hist. Phil. Gr.*, 500 and 500a; Diog. Laer. vii. 136; Heinze, *Die Lehre vom Logos*, p. 114.

² Cic. *De nat. deor.* ii. 41: "contra ille corporeus [sc. ignis] uitalis et salutaris omnia conseruat alit auget sustinet sensuque adficit . . . quare cum solis ignis similis eorum ignium sit, qui sunt in corporibus animalium, solem quoque animantem esse oportet et quidem reliqua astra, quae orientur in ardore caelesti, qui aether uel caelum nominatur"; *Tusc. disp.* i. 19: "Zenoni Stoico animus ignis uidetur"; Diog. Laer. vii. 157: *Ζήνων δὲ . . . πνεῦμα ἐνθεμον εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν*; cf. *ibid.* 156, 143 (the human soul part of the world-soul, which is *πῦρ τεχνικόν*). For the two kinds of fire see Ritter and Preller, *op. cit.*, 495; also Varro *De l. l.* 5. 59; "itaque Epicharmus cum dicit de mente humana ait: istic est de sole sumptus ignis. idem de sole: isque totus mentis est."

³ According to the Stoics the highest god was *πῦρ τεχνικόν* (*Plac.* i. 7. 33 = *Dox.* 305; Diog. Laer. vii. 147). But it is to be noticed that Ovid is speaking of *di*, not the *opifex rerum*.

⁴ E.g., i. 213.

to show agreement in the several items of the elements, their arrangement, the erect stature of man, the characteristic qualities of the elements, the creating deity, the zones, the place of the stars, the earth, the proper inhabitants of each of the elements, the animation of the stars, their divinity, the divine seed of man, and the likeness of his mind to the divine fire. Some of these topics are peculiar to Stoicism; all could have been found in the Stoic treatises on the world and its providential ordering. Stoicism in Ovid's day was well known at Rome, and Stoic sources were perhaps easiest of access to Ovid. He would not, in view of his own character and the nature of his project, seek to outline faithfully and in all its detail the Stoic cosmogony; but it has been seen in how few places he has failed to accord with the latter. In view of all these things I regard it highly probable that the account presented by Ovid is essentially Stoic.

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